

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 IO-11 SAB-01 OES-03 AID-05

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01 OMB-01 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 /094 W

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P R 262247Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8947

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OAS, AR, CU AO, PN, US, NU

SUBJECT: OAS SECRETARY GENERAL VISITS NICARAGUA

SUMMARY: OAS SEC GEN ORFILA VISITED NICARAGUA JANUARY 19-22

CARRYING OFF WELL A ROUND OF VISITS AND INTERVIEWS. END SUMMARY

1. SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAS ALEJANDRO ORFILA CONCLUDED A THREE DAY VISIT TO NICARAGUA JAN. 22. HIS VISIT INCLUDED MEETINGS WITH ARCHBISHOP MIGUEL OBANDO Y BRAVO, PRESIDENT SOMOZA, ALL THE MINISTERS, THE SUPREME COURT, THE PRESIDENTS OF BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS, NICARAGUA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. SEVILLA-SACASA AND LEADING BUSINESS FIGURES. ORFILA ALSO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE JAN. 21, GIVING HIS IMPRESSIONS OF HIS VISIT AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS.

2. ORFILA'S REMARKS DURING HIS VISIT WERE GENERAL AND COMPLIMENTARY TO NICARAGUA IN NATURE. HE CHARACTERIZED HIS VISIT AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRIMARILY A PROJECT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, RATHER THAN OF SUBSTANTIVE

DISCUSSIONS. HE ALSO DECLARED THAT THE POSITION OF OAS SECRETARY GENERAL IS ADMINISTRATIVE RATHER THAN POLITICAL AND THUS AVOIDED ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS ON ARGENTINA. MUCH OF ORFILA'S TIME WAS DEVOTED TO COURTESY CALLS ON GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND LEADING BUSINESSMEN AS HE INSPECTED THE PROGRESS OF NICARAGUAN RECONSTRUCTION. HE ALSO MET PRIVATELY WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA, BUT IT IS NOW KNOWN WHAT THEY DISCUSSED. HE DECLARED HIMSELF TO BE VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE SCALE OF THE RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM AND GAVE ASSURANCES OF THE GOOD WILL OF THE LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEIR DESIRE TO COOPERATE AND LEND WHATEVER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED. HE PRAISED THE MANNER IN WHICH THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE HAD RECOVERED FROM THE TRAUMA OF THE EARTHQUAKE AND IN WHICH THEY SET ABOUT HELPING THEMSELVES.

3. IN ANSWER-

ING QUESTIONS AT A NEWS CONFERENCE ORFILA SOUGHT TO SIDESTEP MOST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER CUBAN PARTICIPATION IN ANGOLA WAS THE SAME AS U.S. INTERVENTION IN LATIN AMERICA, HE REPLIED THAT LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES REJECT ALL INTERVENTION. ASKED ABOUT WHAT CONCRETE FORM OAS ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUAN RECONSTRUCTION MIGHT TAKE, ORFILA SAID HE DID NOT KNOW. A QUESTION ABOUT THE VISIT OF PANAMA CHIEF OF STATE OMAR TORRIJOS TO CUBA BROUGHT THE REPLY THAT AS A PANAMANIAN HE HAD THE RIGHT TO VISIT ANY COUNTRY HE DESIRED IN PURSUIT OF HIS COUNTRY'S WELFARE AND THAT HE WAS SUBJECT TO JUDGEMENT ONLY BY THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE. ORFILA DID GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT THE PROVISION IN THE U.S. TRADE ACT DISCRIMINATING AGAINST OPEC MEMBERS WAS UNFORTUNATE AND HAD BEEN RECEIVED UNFAVORABLY IN LATIN AMERICA. HE SAID THAT HE HOPED THE U.S. WOULD SOON REVISE THE LAW SO THAT ALL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES COULD HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO THE U.S. MARKET. WITH REGARD TO THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, ORFILA ANNOUNCED THAT AN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERENCE WOULD BE CREATED TO HELP IN IMPLEMENTING THE LEVEL OF EXTERNAL TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATE TO EACH COUNTRY. HE FINISHED BY SAYING THAT HE WAS CONTENT THAT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FIGURES HAD GIVEN HIM A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE SITUATION WAS IN NICARAGUA, AND OF WHAT THE OAS COULD DO TO HELP NICARAGUA.

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4. IN AN OVERHEARD CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN MONTIEL AT A RECEPTION, ORFILA BROUGHT UP THE PROBLEM OF REFORM OF OAS CHARTER REMAKING THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE PERMANENT COUNCIL WEAKENED OR EVEN ABOLISHED. MONTIEL SEEMED TAKEN ABACK AND ARGUED THAT PERMANENT COUNCIL OUGHT TO BE STRENGTHENED, NOT WEAKENED.

5. ORFILA MADE GOOD OFFICIALS WINCE WHEN HE INCLUDED A CALL

ON SOMOZA NEMESIS PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO, DIRECTOR OF LA PRENSA. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, ORFILA OBLIGED WITH A CHAMORRO REQUEST TO DROP IN AT HOME AND PHOTOS APPEARED THE NEXT DAY IN LA PRENSA OF BOTH EXAMINING SOME OF CHAMORRO'S PERSONAL MEMENTOS COMMEMORATING HIS 30 YEAR STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOMOZAS.

6. IN ANOTHER SENSITIVE MOMENT, ORFILA'S VISIT TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES WAS MARKED BY A LECTURE FROM CHAMBER PRESIDENT CORNELIO HUECK WHO CHARGED THAT OAS MEMBERS WERE "FAILING MISERABLY" IN THEIR EFFORTS AT CHARTER REFORM BECAUSE THEY WERE SEEKING TO ENSHRINE ONE-SIDED IDEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS IN THE DOCUMENT. HUECK LATER TOLD POLOFF GLEEFULLY THAT HE HAD USED AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD'S SPEECH AND THE COPY OF THE AIDE-MEMOIRE THAT WE GAVE HIM DURING THE ROBERT WHITE VISIT IN DECEMBER AS THE BACKGROUND FOR HIS REMARKS.

7. COMMENT: ORFILA'S VISIT WAS CARRIED OFF WELL. HE SUCCESSFULLY CONVEYED AN IMAGE OF A SMOOTH AND INTELLIGENT DIPLOMAT, CURIOUS ABOUT A BROAD SPECTRUM OF NICARAGUAN LIFE AND CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OAS.  
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**TAGS:** PORG, OTRA, AR, CU, AO, PN, US, NU, OAS, (ORFILA, ALEJANDRO)  
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